

Amendments to the Claims

1. (Currently Amended) A cover for an airbag module comprising:
 - a plate member having a top surface to be exposed to a vehicle cabin and a back surface, wherein the plate member is configured to be mated with an instrument panel; and
 - a frame member extending from the a-back surface of the plate member;wherein the plate member and the frame member are configured to be formed separately and joined after formation;
 - wherein the frame member includes an opening; ~~and~~
 - wherein the plate member covers the opening;
 - wherein the plate member is an elastomeric material; and
 - wherein the back surface of the plate member is configured to make unobstructed contact with the airbag upon deployment.
2. (Currently Amended) A cover for an airbag module according to claim 1, wherein the elastomeric material is a ~~the plate member is formed of~~ thermoplastic elastomer.
3. (Original) A cover for an airbag module according to claim 1, wherein the frame member is formed of thermoplastic synthetic resin.
4. (Original) A cover for an airbag module according to claim 1, further comprising a bond between the plate member and the frame member.
5. (Original) A cover for an airbag module according to claim 4, wherein the bond comprises a vibration welded bond.
6. (Original) A cover for an airbag module according to claim 1, wherein the frame member includes a base portion.
7. (Original) A cover for an airbag module according to claim 6, wherein the frame member includes an extension member.

8. (Original) A cover for an airbag module according to claim 6, wherein the base portion is joined with the back surface of the plate member.

9. (Original) A cover for an airbag module according to claim 6, further comprising a bond between the base portion and the plate member.

10. (Original) A cover for an airbag module according to claim 9, wherein the bond comprises a vibration welded bond.

11. (Original) A cover for an airbag module according to claim 7, wherein the extension member extends in a direction away from the back surface of the plate member.

12. (Original) A cover for an airbag module according to claim 11, wherein the base portion extends from the extension member in a direction away from a center portion of the plate member and in a direction toward an edge portion of the plate member.

13. (Original) A cover for an airbag module according to claim 6, wherein the plate member includes a projection formed on the back surface;
wherein the base portion includes an aperture; and
wherein the aperture is configured to accept the projection.

14. (Original) A cover for an airbag module according to claim 13, wherein the projection is received in the aperture.

15. (Original) A cover for an airbag module according to claim 14, wherein an engagement between the projection and the aperture is undetachable.

16. (Currently Amended) A cover for an airbag module according to claim 14, wherein an end of the projection includes a keeper member, and

wherein the keeper member is configured to enlarge an end of the projection so that the projection remains engaged with the aperture.

17. (Original) A cover for an airbag module according to claim 16, wherein the keeper member comprises caulking.

18. (Currently Amended) A cover for an airbag module according to claim 14, further comprising a retaining member, and

wherein the retaining member is attached to an end of the projection so that the projection remains engaged with the opening.

19. (Original) A cover for an airbag module according to claim 18, wherein the retaining member comprises a clip.

20. (Currently Amended) A cover for an airbag module comprising:
a plate member configured to be mated with an instrument panel; and
a frame member extending from a back surface of the plate member;
wherein the plate member and the frame member are configured to be formed separately and joined after formation; ~~and~~
wherein the plate member is formed of thermoplastic elastomer; and
wherein the back surface of the plate member is configured to make unobstructed contact with the airbag upon deployment.

21. (Currently Amended) A cover for an airbag module for a vehicle comprising:
a plate member having a top surface to be exposed to a vehicle cabin and a back surface, wherein the plate member is configured to be mated with an instrument panel; and
a frame member connected to the a-back surface of the plate member;
wherein the frame member is not integral with the plate member and includes an opening for the airbag so that when deploying, the airbag does not deform the frame member;
wherein the plate member is an elastomeric material; and

wherein the back surface is configured to make unobstructed contact with the airbag upon deployment.

22. (Currently Amended) An airbag module for protecting an occupant of a vehicle comprising:

an airbag; and

a cover having a plate member and a frame member;

wherein the plate member has a top surface to be exposed to a vehicle cabin and a back surface; and

wherein the frame member extends from the a-back surface of the plate member;

wherein the plate member is configured to be mated with an instrument panel;

wherein the plate member and the frame member are configured to be formed separately and joined after formation;

wherein the frame member includes an opening; ~~and~~

wherein the plate member covers the opening;

wherein the plate member is an elastomeric material; and

wherein the bottom surface is configured to make unobstructed contact with the airbag upon deployment.